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ABSTRACT

The writings in this collection were contributed by elementary, junior high school, and senior high school teachers during their participation in the South Bay Area (California) Writing Project. The writings are of a variety of genres, including personal memoirs, letters, character sketches, fiction, poetry, fables, and statements about writing. The publication also includes a brief description of the project, in which teachers shared teaching ideas and experienced writing; a list of observations about the teaching of writing compiled by project participants; and a list of resources for the writing teacher. (DF)

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PUDDLES

South Bay Area Writing Project

1977 Writing Institute

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SOUTH BAY AREA WRITING PROJECT at San Jose

Affiliated with the CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT

The South Bay Area Writing Project was formed to meet the expressed needs of teachers in the service community of San Jose State University. Part of the California Writing Project, its aim is to improve student writing through working with teachers of writing.

The first activity of the South Bay Area Writing Project was a Writing Institute held June 27-July 29 at SJSU. The unique feature of this institute was its composition--an equal representation of elementary, junior high and high school teachers. Institute participants proved that teachers of all levels can work effectively together to achieve a common goal and that interaction across grade levels is not only possible, but essential!

Emphasis was placed on the writing process through (1) presenting teaching ideas and (2) experiencing writing. The writing included in this book is a sampling of things we shared. The stimulus for writing ranged from short stories by Frank O'Connor and Richard Brautigan to films such as Cipher in the Snow and Greenbean to haiku by the Japanese masters. All forms of writing were explored--letters, diaries, personal memoirs, free verse, articles, narration. Many participants discovered writing as something personally rewarding and gained confidence in their ability to write. Others changed their ideas about how and why to encourage student writing. All gained much from this five-week intensive experience.

Sponsors of the 1977 Writing Institute:

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Dr. Iris M. Tiedt
Project Facilitator
408/264-3819

Address:

Box 1524
San Jose, CA 95109

TEACHING WRITING

Having participated in the South Bay Area Writing Project, we have made the following observations about the teaching of writing:

I. A safe accepting environment is essential to developing a climate in which students feel free to express themselves in writing.

II. Writing develops from an oral language foundation. All writing programs, therefore, should include oral language experiences.

III. The development of writing fluency should precede structured writing experiences.

IV. Teachers of writing should write. By participating in writing assignments, teachers gain insight into the writing process that students experience.

V. Students should write as frequently as possible, and should be provided with a variety of writing experiences both free and structured.

VI. While grammar does have a place in the English curriculum, there is little correlation between the teaching of grammar and the teaching of writing.

VII. Students write more effectively when their audience expands beyond the teacher.

VIII. Teachers have more to offer to the evaluation of student writing than copy editing. Students learn to write more effectively by sharing the responsibility for the editing process with the teachers.

Participants: 1977 Writing Institute

Shirley Newsom
Johanna Carlson
Alice Halloran
Marilyn Miller
Gwen Marks
Greg Martin
Jan Seaburg
Claudia Parker
William Rice
Bert Howard
Sue Bruemmer
Mary Anne Simpson
Rita Prime
Betty Grand
Pat Penick
Virginia McRae

THOUGHTS ON WRITING

Writing is a kind of skin shedding--but of the inner layer. It is a splendid way to capture what we otherwise would lose through fleeting spoken or unspoken thought.

Johanna Carlson

What seems to make the human species stand out among a myriad of more beautiful, stronger, swifter, and more cunning animals is our ability to think and to communicate. Writing is the most challenging application of the thinking and communicating process. Therefore, for me, writing is the most humanizing endeavor to be undertaken by an individual.

William J. Rice

The primary reason for writing is to create order out of chaos--to give shape to a small segment of the vast inner world within each person. The greatest challenge for the writer is to <u>show</u> rather than to <u>tell</u>.

Bert Howard

I believe writing to be vital to a growing, thinking person, and I want my students to realize a need for writing for one's own edification.

Claudia Parker

Frogs: Or On Becoming an Adult

I've always wanted to be an adult. I remember thinking during pubescence that I must surely be on the brink of adulthood, only to be disappointed. As a matter of fact, it seems I'm always being disappointed when it comes to becoming an adult. Somehow I never quite arrive, if you know what I mean.

I remember the time I left for college--I mean, making the big break from mother's apron strings and everything--again only to find that college didn't offer any courses in adulthood. You know, courses in marriage, parenthood, even knowing yourself, but no adulthood courses. It would be a welcomed addition to the curriculum, don't you think? I always meant to bring it to someone's attention, you know, a dean, the president, or some other adult in-the-know on campus. My roommates thought it was a good idea, too. (All except Trisha who was already an adult. She arrived early, so early, in fact, that she couldn't even pinpoint the exact moment. Somehow this annoyed me. I mean, here I was, anticipating this great event in my life, and here she was, forgetting it when it had happened to her. The nerve of some people! We were never close. She was a Gemini--possibly Geminis mature earlier, I don't know. Anyway we weren't close, and I wasn't in her wedding. In fact, I never heard if she married or not.)

Hence college was somewhat disappointing. I did encounter more people who were adults. (You see, an adult often walks with a slight skip, smiles a lot, talks little, and has a bulging vein on his neck or forehead indicating stress of profound thought.) Some of my professors were adults, although most were not.

One person who I at first recognized as an adult proved later not to be one. Actually I was relieved since I married him and decided that I would have felt left out if he had arrived and I hadn't. Although we didn't really talk about our pursuit of adulthood, I knew we had a common goal. Only,

it didn't seem to matter much to him. I couldn't decide why. I mean, if you're 23 and not an adult, what are you? He often bothered me with profound questions that I couldn't answer, thereby nakedly revealing my lack of adulthood. As I fumbled for answers, he'd always say, "See, I've made by point!" but I never could see his point. Maybe, I decided, he had arrived and was only trying to fool me. I became suspicious of his true identity. Then one night while lying in bed, he confessed a confusion about where he was and where he was going. I breathed a sigh of relief. He wasn't an adult, I thought, and we'd continue groping together, so to speak, if you know what I mean.

Years, wishes, thoughts, and vegetables seem to run together for me these days. I do know that houses, cars, kids, insurance premiums came and went and I still hadn't become an adult, although I thought my kids recognized me as one. At least, they would look at me funny sometimes, and I would anxiously feel my neck or forehead anticipating a bulging blood vessel. As a matter of fact, I grew quite accustomed to not being an adult, and consequently, I almost dreaded the moment when it would happen. (Or would it ever happen? I was becoming a skeptic.) I even felt kinda sorry for Trisha sometimes. I wondered if being an adult at such an early age must have been burdensome. I didn't think much about her, though. We were never close.

The other day in a book store (no, a book hasn't yet been published on "On Becoming an Adult") a young woman (I'm not sure if she was an adult) approached me and asked, "Where are the frogs?" I directed her to the third row on the right, B-3. She thanked me and I stood there stunned. My God, I had become an adult!

Claudia Parker
July, 1977

Dear Ernst,

I was sitting on the bus as usual this morning(the number 54 I always take to the Golden Age Rec. Center) along with Mathilda, Mr. Krepismann, Mr. Sullivan, and Hortensia. We're the regulars and today was the monthly backgammon tournament against the Hayes Valley Sunset Club. Hortensia wasn't playing, but she always comes along to root for Mr. Sullivan. She's really sweet on him though how she can put up with his long-winded stories about his late wife is more than I can fathom, but she has hopes.

Anyway, we were all moving along at a good clip with Frank, the usual bus driver on the 9:15 bus. He's a good bus driver-- always moves over real close to the curb so we don't have to leap across the gutter. Some of the young drivers don't know how hard it is to get off the bus. Those steps are awfully high. A good driver can make it lots easier for us.

About Grant Street a young hippie got on. Ernst, you should have seen him! He looked around at us and his eyes bugged out like he'd never seen old people before. He got real nervous, sat down as far away as he could get and started folding up his transfer into little bitty squares. The bus started to move a little faster, and Mr. Sullivan held onto his lapels as usual. He's kind of shaky, but he won't hang onto the seat. No sir, he just holds his elbows in and centers himself.

Hortensia fiddled with her handkerchief, drying her fingers. She always gets nervous before one of Mr. Sullivan's big backgammon matches and her hands sweat.

We all looked at the young fellow. Have you ever felt like a freak, Ernst? This young man looked at us like we were prime exhibits in a side-show. His eyes got all shifty, and he squirmed, but he couldn't take his eyes off us. It sure did make me feel twitchy, like I had two heads or something. He gave us all the feeling we were inhuman or something worse.

It was a real relief when he scuttled off the bus. We all relaxed. Frank, the driver, laughed his deep old belly laugh. "He must have thought old age was contagious. Give him time, he'll grow up."

We won the match, Ernst. The Hayes Valley Team didn't stand a chance against Mr. Sullivan and the rest of us.

Love,

Emily

Mary Anne Simpson

"Bridges"

The silver bridge, black
trestle below; and below both
the river flows.

Pat Penick

DEATHWATCH

Laboring over every breath, he huddles in his chair in the corner, seemingly trying to disappear into the pattern on the upholstery. Vacant eyes, no longer capable of expressing human emotions, stare out from the wizened face. A tattered shawl, its colors no longer distinguishable, protect his hunched shoulders from the chilled night air, while gnarled hands like bent twigs on a barren winter lawn lay in his lap, clasped one over the other in a gesture of submission. The folds of a coverlet envelop the flaccid thighs, the scrawny legs, and the bony ankles, revealing a glimpse of transparent white skin . . mottled with blue veins above the well-worn brown slippers resting on the hardwood floor. Gone is the vibrant human being that once occupied this now emaciated shell. Only in our memories does he still laugh, cry, experience-----live.

Marilyn Miller

"Forty-one"

Forty-one years old,
gout and bad knees --
rising expectations.

Pat Renick

Inspired by the film Stringbean

GRANMA

She sits humpbacked, her long bony fingers guiding the cloth, her black slippered feet tapping the treadle, whirring a symphony. Her labor, evening bags, is not even a memento of her past for she has no past. Granma's road isn't paved with recall.

Present time is her world. To look back is playing with time. It also leads one to look ahead. There is danger in this. At 84, Granma gives thanks for each now; she keeps her mind away from "tomorrow" thoughts. Tomorrow thoughts show greed. They're asking for more than one's a right to.

Now is this room with gray, grease-spotted linoleum, edged by ancient, pitted floor boards. It's the blackened stove pressed against faded green, cracked walls. Now is the mottled gray enamel pot the lid to which comes from an even more ancient, long-gone vessel. It's the pot contents, beans, carelessly rinsed and constantly soaking for the single supper each evenings. Now is the oil-cloth topped wooden table and its single chair, one leg deluded into stability by a bit of folded cardboard, the origin of which is long since forgotten.

But today--now wavers! Enter one recent acquisition in the shape of a clay pot, whim-captured from the alley trash can of a less interested, less illuminated individual. Granma grips the clay pot in both hands purposefully, releases one hand to lift the cook pot lid, pokes her fingers down inside to pick out the

largest of the beans and then presses her prize with the same soaked fingers into the earth of the clay pot. This she sets dead center on the sill of the narrow window.

As if to urge the sun's rays on to her prize, Granma's head tilts while her long legs take their cue, spin her round, then pirouette her toward the stack of evening bags. The one she chooses she clutches with both hands extended, held eye-level in front of her. Yesterday is in her embrace and as she looks toward the clay pot on the tiny sill, anticipation marks tomorrow when the bean pushes its way up through the black earth toward renewal.

By Shirley Newsom

WINTER IN SPRING

She began the pattern in late May. I had been taking my lunch among the statuary in the south end of the park since early Spring. I felt so alive sitting on the lawn bordered by the various flowers with their myriad colors. It was such a refreshing contrast to the accounting office with its calculators, typewriters, formica desks, and stiff-backed chairs. I felt so free and alive in the park I wanted to capture every sensation. My ears tuned in to every sound, and my eyes absorbed every view. The children and their boundless energy were my favorite; that is until she entered my life. Her appearance was totally incongruous with the park, which was alive with Spring. She was Winter: bleak, dark and barren. Daily at noon she could be seen shuffling down the gravel

walk that led from Holly Street. It took her almost half an hour to walk the 100 yards to her bench. Then she would firmly grasp the arm of the bench with her gnarled left hand and slowly lower herself onto the hard plank seat. Once she was securely situated, she would cross her bony legs, always right over left. Then she would just sit. She paid no attention to the people or the statues. She even seemed to be oblivious of the flowers. She just perched there on the bench, her withered face thrust sunward, savoring its rays like the last bite of a good meal.

One day, however, she broke the pattern by bringing a companion. She appeared at her usual time, but she was carrying a tote bag. After she found her spot on the bench, she eased a plant from the bag; and the two of them, one old--one young, sat there, a couple of stringbeans in the sun.

She followed this last routine for the next ten days, but then she did something that I can't explain. After she had rested on her bench for about ten minutes, she pulled herself up, grabbed her small plant, and moved across to the statue of an Athenian athlete. There, at its base, she gently removed the plant from its pot and proceeded to plant it among the zinnias and marigolds. That scraggy plant looked as out of place among those brilliant flowers as she did amidst the Greek statues. I say I can't explain her behavior because there was still plenty of room in the pot for the budding plant to grow. I guess she just got tired of carrying it. That was late July and she stopped coming about a week before August ended. I never found out what happened to her. I only wish that she could have seen all the pods that sprouted from that scrawny little plant.

William J. Rice

THOUGHTS ON WRITING

I believe that all my students can write moving, powerful stuff.

As a teacher of writing, I see my principal responsibility to be to awaken that potential within my students.

In a sense I do not--cannot--teach them to write. What I can do is guide them to those writing experiences which will tap them emotionally and intellectually.

Pat Penick

To capture a thought that is perfectly clear with words that dance on the page is a talent we all possess, but to nurture that talent so that it may grow you first must find someone who cares that you write.

Gwen Marks

How do I surmount the huge mountain of repetition, the vague but genuine expression of ideas and feelings? Would writing do it? Could some cascading of ideas filter through my brain and form a strong stream, provided none of the irrelevant dribbled through my mouth? Could writing reach my hand, pen, sprawl onto my paper and thereby diminish the mountain to a mere midden?

Of course, because writing sorts out for me. It makes me think about what's said, what's really meant, and how I feel about it all.

Shirley Newsom

Betty Grand

Hey! School Starts Next Week!

Molly wakened lazily to another bright sunshiny morning. She stretched, turned over, and thought about the day ahead. The summer had been filled with seemingly endless hours of carefree play, and Molly wondered what she and her friends would find to do today. She got out of bed and went to the open window. As she looked out on the street she took a deep breath of the morning air, and was suddenly aware of a change. A subtle dryness, different from the summer, made her aware of the changing seasons. Summer was ending! That slight but definite difference she noted signaled the approach of fall. Fall? Her heart pounded. The start of school must be just around the corner!

Thoughts, questions, hopes and fears raced though her mind. It seemed like an eternity since she had been in school. Quickly she dressed, and raced downstairs. "Mother! Mother!" she cried. "How many days until school starts?" Her mother was feeding her brother who was banging his spoon on the tray of his highchair. "School starts in one more week, Molly," she said.

Slowly Molly drank her orange juice, but her excitement began to mount as she thought about opening day. What fun it would be to see many of the friends she had not seen all summer! There would be new friends too, and it was fun to try to imagine how the new school term might seem.

What would this year be like? Would the new teacher welcome her with a smile? What kind of person would the teacher be? Would many of her old friends be in her class? Oh, she especially hoped she would be in the same class with Jill, her dearest friend. Which of the new classrooms would be hers? Would she like her desk? Would she have to sit next to Jim who always teased her? What kind of studies would she have in her new grade? Would they seem stimulating and exciting, or would the days seem long and dull?

As Molly's mind raced on and on with questions, one thought stood out above the rest. It had been a wonderful summer, and she had enjoyed the easy, slow days, but that scent of fall in the air was exciting, and next week--why. . . . .

The screen door banged as Molly raced outside. "Hey---Terry! Brad! Sue! Do you know school starts next week?"

Award of the Year!

The Cavorting Custodians' Caucus was the first to recognize Dustin for his talent as a custodian. He made his debut at a very young age. He cleaned the kindergarten rooms first. After that he moved on the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade classrooms.

In one flourish of the broom, Dustin will demonstrate as many as three different movements selecting them from his repertoire of wrist and hand sleightings. The flick to left and circle round he feels is his best.

He blends wrist and hand movements with kicking motions offering such personal favorites as chaussée left and chaussée right, pas de bourrée, pas de bourrée, hey!

His appearances on school grounds have endeared him to students as well as other school staff as have his antics in the classrooms as well as the lavatories.

A favorite hangout of Dustin's is the broom closet where he can be himself holding on to the sink basins for support as well as the dust mops for balance.

Named in 1976 as Custodian of the Year at the Jolly Janitors' Jamboree, Dustin has been the recipient of a variety of awards.

-Jo Carlson

Vegetation

Once upon a gloomy avocado, there spinached a little turnip who was beet to the ears. This squash-necked infant caused much trouble in the vegetable bin, so the other members of the rutabaga decided to corn him. It was bean time in Broccoli country and, of course, everyone knew what that meant. Since it was an onion-picking day, this was a good reason for being cauliflowered so all the vegetables cucumbered right on up to the bar and drank down a potent mixture of kale, artichokes and parsley. Rosemary got really high and bopped turnip on the eggplant. Basil cropped up and lettuced tomato right in his artichoke. Soon thyme declared that turnip had certainly learned his potato and that from now on all brussel sprouts would be squashed.

-Rita Prime

"First Grade" by Pat Penick

Mrs. Blake again stopped the music. The moving circle of laughing first graders haltingly stopped with it.

"Jimmy," Mrs. Blake addressed a wiry, freckled boy, "you're not skipping; you're galloping. Sarah, show Jimmy how to skip."

A little girl in a green dress faultlessly skipped a few paces. Jimmy and the others looked on soberly.

Mrs. Blake put her hand on the On-Off dial of the phonograph. She smiled, "See, Jimmy, it's really easy. A little sliding hop on one foot, then a little sliding hop on the other."

Jimmy smiled, "I'd rather gallop."

THERE WAS AN OLD LADY IN SCHOOL,
WHO USED THE TEXT BOOK AS A TOOL,
FOR THOSE WHO KNEW NOT
OR CARED NOT A JOT,
THEN WONDERED WHICH ONE WAS THE FOOL.

Ginny McRae

"People"

People are like fruit.
Some have cores, others pits.
Some have no real center at all.

Pat Penick

CONTEMPORARY KOAN

The Boy and the Lake

A boy lived in a beautiful house near a clear blue lake. Every day he stood on the deck behind the house and watched the lake. He learned all the different moods and feelings of the lake. Occasionally, he spoke aloud to the lake, thanking it for its beauty and for the happiness it brought him. He loved the lake and planned to live beside it forever. He resented anything that took him away from the lake. Sometimes, at night, he dreamed of the lake and the dreams brought peaceful sleep.

One day the boy came home from school much later than usual. It was a cold day; so, the boy built a fire in the fireplace. He sat in front of the fire for a long time, staring into it.

After awhile, the boy stood up and went out to see his lake. He gazed at it for several minutes. Then, he took some kindling wood and a book of matches and walked down a path to the shore of the lake. After whispering softly, "I love you, Lake, " he put the pile of kindling into the lake and set it afire with the matches.

Soon, the lake burned brightly. The boy stood and looked at the blazing lake. He felt its warmth on his body. His skin glowed red from the flames. A slight smile softened his face as he watched the lake burn and blacken. A lone tear crept quietly down his left cheek.

***** Bert Howard

"Freeway"

The dead Spitz on the
freeway, hackle rising and falling
as cars blow by.

by Pat Penick

A MODERN FABLE

Slamming the door behind him, Jason ran quickly to his zippy red Honda. He hopped on it and in a flash he was off to the swim club.

As Jason sped onto the busy freeway he zig-zagged from one lane of traffic to the other, dodging cars and trucks in order to maintain his speed. He soon neared the Lark Street Exit which would lead him to the swim club.

When Jason arrived at the club he hastily parked his Honda and rushed into the swimming area to join his friends who were already enjoying the cool water of the spacious swimming pool.

"Hurry, Jason," Jack yelled. "Get into your suit -- the water's great".

Suddenly Jason realized that in his rush to get to the swim club he had forgotten his swim trunks as well as his lunch.

Moral: Hurrying's okay but you may rue the day.

By Alice Canario Halloran

THOUGHTS ON WRITING

Writing is that skill which enables man to communicate better his or her thoughts, feelings, hopes and comprehensions with him or her self and others.

Ginny McRae

In the language experience approach the oral language of the student is recorded while the student tells a story. As the desire to communicate evolves, the linguistic and cognitive growth of the student progresses to ever higher symbolic levels. Gradually, the student's feelings of self-worth allow him to expand his concepts of the world and he becomes less introverted. Now he is moving from the concrete to the abstract, from the known to the unknown, and he is no longer learning disabled.

Alice Canario Halloran

The writing teacher's task is to provide opportunities for the student to expand, enhance and refine his language and learning abilities in an atmosphere of trust and acceptance.

Betty Grand

Writing is very much like cauliflower.

Greg Martin

AN OBEDIENT DAUGHTER

by Jan Seaburg

My mother had been divorced for a few years when she asked a male friend home to dinner. Needless to say, this was a big step for her and she was anxious, fearing that something would go wrong. On the morning of the dinner, she called my sister and me aside explaining that Mr. Tyle "was a very nice person." I knew, by the way she enunciated nice that something was wrong with him--an extra finger, stutters, whatever. She went on to explain. "He's a very very nice person and I want you two to be on your best." I caught the second very and knew it was going to be good. I conjured up all sorts of imaginative plays on the human form. "He has, unfortunately," she went on, "a rather large nose." So that was it. It was going to be gigantic, I knew it. "And I want to make sure you don't stare the way children sometimes do."

Nancy and I went to our bedroom and had roaring dialogs about the man who would come to our door that night, wheeling his nose in front inside a red wagon, and how he'd use a sheet for a handkerchief. We were merciless, but knew we'd better get it all out before Bozo arrived.

We spent the day washing and waxing floors and setting little dishes of nuts and candy around. My mother slaved over the stove for hours, her hair in a bandana with pincurls underneath. She was nervous and we knew we'd better not cross her. We did the best we could to make the house look like no one lived there. I set the table with good silver and napkins

folded diagonally, the way we did at Christmas.

At last Bozo was due. I could tell by my mother's earrings. She had said little that day, besides instructing us to be washed, brushed and smiling by 7. We were. Impeccably. Nancy said I looked idiotic in a dress and I kicked her swiftly before my mother came into the room for final instructions. She was having more thoughts about Bozo and his nose. Her mouth was tight and her words jutted forward thinly. She told us that if we stared, pointed or laughed, we would be grounded for 2 weeks with no "Leave It To Beaver." My heart sank. My breathing stopped. How would I face the kids at school without the latest scoop about Wally and Beaver and their well-adjusted suburban family. I determined right then that I would bite a hole through my upper lip before I'd so much as smile at the wrong time.

The doorbell rang. I ran into the bathroom and stayed there until the dinner was served and my absence was definitely noticed. Meekly, I slipped through the door and walked into the dining room. My mother introduced me and I smiled politely, saying that I was pleased to meet the rug, which is where I kept my stare. My upper lip was drawn tightly between my teeth and I did very well, I thought, at receiving the passed dishes with my face cast downwards, just slightly above my plate. Thank God my mother asked Nancy to say Grace, which she did beautifully, I hated her, just as if we always said a blessing before meals.

I had my plate fairly well occupied with roast beef and trimmings when I discovered that my favorite, mashed potatoes, had passed me by. I couldn't possibly eat my mother's stringy roast without plenty of satiny potatoes and gravy. I tried to tell myself that I could do without, just this once. I could take big swigs of milk between bites -- something. But I could smell the potatoes. I swear Nancy was taking big bites and blowing the steam toward me. I decided to hide all her new bras after dinner, just for being such a damned little lady in her flats without socks.

I couldn't bear it. I absolutely had to have potatoes. I would have run a mile for mashed potatoes, followed any of Nancy's constant dares -- stand on the overpass without clothes, ride my bike down one aisle at Safeway yelling 'The Wizzard of Oz eats q-tips,' ANYTHING. I made the decision that I would have to confront the situation and have faith in myself.

Carefully, painstakingly, I began raising my head, my lip still clutched stingingly between my teeth. I could see that the potatoes were directly in front of Bozo's tie. I didn't dare reach. I'd simply have to look at him casually -- quickly -- and ask for the potatoes. Slowly my eyes climbed the pattern of his shirt upward toward his neck, chin, and finally his nose.

It was like nothing I'd ever seen before. Bulbous to be sure -- almost wider than it was long. The skin stretched tightly over the bridge, expanding the pores and becoming slightly red with the tension. As well as I could, I began talking slowly, to see if I could keep my lip between my teeth so there'd be no chance that I'd laugh and still be understood. I was relieved that I could emit sound that was somewhat recognizable, although I knew I'd probably have to repeat myself. Carefully, slowly, I asked Bozo to pass his nose.

Little Miss Carrot
Squashed in a cabbage
Broccoling her turnips and peas
Along came a bean and completed the scene
While spinaching brussel sprouts green.

There was an old brussel sprout who
squashed in a shoe;
She had so many artichokes she didn't know
what to do.
She corned them all soundly and put them to kale
And whispered sweet spinach to end this veg tale!

Rita Prime

A Sonnet

I do not have the missionary's call
A cipher in the snow he seemed to be.
Although his death diminishes you and me,
I can not stop the avalanche's fall.
I can not play the rescuing angel's part.
The burden is too great for me to hold.
Alone I can not will the faltering heart
To go on beating in the piercing cold.
The arctic winds that swept across his life
Have blasted him beyond my furthest reach.
I can no more protect him from such strife,
Than halt the waves that strike the open beach.
I can burn steady with a warming light.
I can not hope to vanquish blackest night.

Mary Anne Simpson

HAIKU

Summer poetry.
Lethargic syllables lean
against strawberries.

----- Bert Howard

Family Rhubarb

I entered the cucumber room with a feeling of spinach. I saw Dad sitting behind his large, eggplant desk and immediately recognized that he was cauliflower. I looked at him with pea eyes, but he chilibeaned back. It was then that I realized that I was zucchini.

"Well," he artichoked. I just stood there feeling spinach. "Do you have anything to say about your stringbean behavior?" I limad for something to say, but nothing came. "Perhaps you'd like to cabbage," he went on. I onioned for a second and then began to leek.

"It wasn't really my parsley," I found myself explaining. I saw the cat lettucing there, so I beeted for school. It never occurred to me to parsnip. By the time I celeried home, it was too late; he was potatoed. What could I have done?"

"I see," my father corned. I'll have to rutabaga before I decide whether or not to squash you. Until then I don't want you carrotting."

As I left the cucumber room, I realized that brocoli was yet to come.

W. J. R.

A MODERN-DAY FABLE

Leftie Turn stood at the corner, discomfort obvious on his bearded face. Not only was his thumb numbed by its hitchhiking position, but his unsupported, zorried-feet were beginning to throb and his machotank-top wasn't providing the warmth he needed in the building fog of a San Francisco evening.

"The pits," he thought, and with it mouthed an expletive toward the motorist who zipped by with a negative nod of the hand. At last a Trans Am slowed to a halt.

"Hey, Clyde," the cute chick in the purple velour driver's seat called to him. "Hop in." Leftie gave the driver the safety-first once over, determined there was no real risk with this foxy gal who amply filled her "IT'S THE WATER" T-shirt, and after picking up his gear he threw it and his TO SACRAMENTO sign onto the back seat and then slipped eagerly beside the driver.

"Leftie Turn," he said as he pulled his cake cutter through his freshly permanented natural.

"Ann Udder," the Trans Am owner responded, smartly picking up Leftie's lead. Then she turned full-faced toward him, spotted the pomegranate-sized capricorn medallion covering only a minute portion of his near fully exposed massive chest and shrieked delightedly, "You're a capricorn!"

"You'd better believe it," Leftie retorted.

"And I'm a taurus," Ann cooed as she nestled into his now receiving arms.

"May simpático," they sighed. For both knew what we knew right along--that one good Turn deserves Ann Udder.

Shirley Newsom

THOUGHTS ON WRITING

Writing is my work, an essential part of my life. I am always working on something, usually several projects at different stages. Although writing is sometimes lonely, I can't imagine a time when I will not be writing.

Iris Tiedt

Writing is a way of discovering what we think and feel, a way of ordering our thoughts. It is a highly personal process involving language, thought and personal experience. Because writing is an extension of self, for me, it requires a safe environment in which to grow.

Sue Bruemmer

In order to teach writing it would seem necessary that one have a philosophy about writing, and that perhaps one of the most important aspects of this philosophy should be a love of and for the many facets of writing. Equally important, one should have a purpose for writing. Finally, one should recognize that writing is only one part of the total communication system and, therefore, must not be isolated from thinking, speaking, reading, and listening but rather an integrated part of the whole.

Rita Prime

My dog died recently and I am still groping for a way to deal with the profound loss I feel. The night she died in the front hallway, after an hour of heaving, heavy breathing, crying, and a last and final convulsion, I felt so guilty as I looked down at her still body - the eyes glazed, the legs no longer twitching.

So many thoughts went through my head in the moment following her death. "Was she really dead? Had she just experienced her life in a quick film? Why wasn't anyone else there to share this tragedy with me?"

I felt a sense of confusion in which self-recrimination was mixed with relief that she no longer suffered. "Why hadn't I sat by her that last hour and petted her instead of going about the usual business of fixing dinner and insensitively eating it while she was in her last moments? True, I had been there at the moment, but she could not have known it. Why was I so selfish then to this loving friend I had known for so many years?"

The winding sheet for my dog was an army canvas offered by my father with the words, "Some soldier killed in Vietnam was probably flown back to the States in this." Though the comment was crude and offhand, it failed to camouflage the gesture of love and support I momentarily felt. I can still smell the mustiness of that canvas which had probably been in a damp garage for several years.

The following morning we disposed of the body by taking it to the SPCA. There are a series of red, metal doors outside the main entrance. The locked ones are already occupied, so a dead or lost animal is placed inside an ajar red door into a little compartment. Next, a card from several which are available in a holder next to the door is filled in with such information as the owner's name, the animal's sex, age, breed, cause of death, if known, and whether or not the animal had been vaccinated. It is also suggested on a large sign that a donation be placed in the slotted strong box nearby. All of this was done without seeing anyone- completely impersonally. My child who had begged off of school to come along opened up the winding cloth for one last look and kissed our dear friend goodbye. Then we closed the self-locking door.

On the way home, my father, as though reading my thoughts, muttered faintly under his breath, "Could a buried her at the Presidio pet cemetery - it's an awful mess though - not kept up. I wanna be cremated when I die. Don't see much point in burials these days." I wonder how he understood that I had been grappling with visions of my dog's cremation just then? The image of a sloppy untended pet graveyard certainly wasn't acceptable now as an alternative. I felt better.

Later that evening, I resurrected my five year old needlepoint - a rather simplistic design consisting of a few dahlias and my dog's head peering through in the center. One of my favorite summer pastimes has been flower gardening, but always with my faithful friend by my side. Anyway, now I was resolved to complete my project as a memorial, if nothing more.

The most touching reminder of my beautiful friend came in the form of a package left by the mailman only a few weeks ago. When I opened it, I was so amazed to find five skeins (1 3/4 lbs.) worth of spun samoyed hair - the end product of several bags of dog hair combings I had taken at least five years earlier to a spinner in San Francisco. My dog died recently and I am still groping for a way to deal with the profound loss I feel.

-Johanna Carlson

"Charlie"

by Pat Penick

Charlie sat alone in my class --
sixteen years old and muscular
beyond belief from gut-wrenching,
soul-twisting twenty-four hour
isometrics.

Charlie ate lunch alone in the crowded quad --
sitting stiffly on stone steps
leading upward to the Senior Benon,
resembling a statue, fully clothed,
about to break out of its stone skin.

Charlie ran alone on the cross country team --
plodding quietly and stiffly behind
the cluster of boys jogging, laughing --
looking like a machine but for
the blazing eyes.

Charlie lay alone on the sidewalk
outside his home,
blood and brains staining the pavement
and his GI uniform,
his body supple and smooth,
his eyes closed in sleep.

THE SUMMIT

Soundlessness encompassed by a boistrous world ,

Reflections of sunlight flicker on the glittering snow ;

Mountain lakes shimmering, their steel-blue waters
cold and forbidding ,

Branches bend, weighted by the burden they bear ,

Vibrant winds prickling my skin, numbing my fingers ;

Cold air invading my nostrils, stinging my lungs ,

Crystals of ice snapping and crunching beneath my skis

Exhilaration at the top of the mountain!

Marilyn Miller

This poem was the result of analyzing the following haiku:

Up the barley rows,
stitching, stitching them together,
a butterfly goes.

The doze of summer is awakened
By the flight of a butterfly
Sewing the parts of the garden together
Into one splendid garment.

Snap zig! Snap zag!
See how it stitches a dahlia to a fuschia
And a snapdragon to a rosemary bush!

Snap zig! Snap zag!
Now the rows of daisies have been connected
By an invisible thread!

Snap zig! Snap zag!
Dare we pull the thread to test the connection
As each garden part is gathered into one magic ruffle?

His mission over, our utilitarian friend disappears.
We sense an inner warmth as once again
Our soul is freshly clad.

-Johanna Carlson

I'D LIKE TO BE

I'd like to be in Istanbul
On the Sea of Marmara.
There's a tiny little island in that sea,
So incredibly compact, alive, and lovely!

A boat trip over on the brilliant blue water
All the campers jammed tightly into the large speeding yacht.

We are met at the shore by horse-pulled carriages.
Cobblestone streets are clattered over rapidly
Uphill
Downhill
Through winding little alley-like streets.

Dozens of bright black Turkish eyes smile at us.
They are so happy on their island,
So sparkling, so bustling, and yet so peaceful.
Absent are the smells or hovels of the mainland,
Poverty, especially of the spirit, is non-existant here.

What a sad thing when we have to depart.

With a longing
I still remember that minute, jolly place
So many thousands of miles from here
So many years ago.

-Jo Carlson

Colossal walls of greyness
Air, cooled by a magnificent waterfall
Foaming, splashing, cascading downward
Roaring over rock worn smooth by rushing water,
Drawn by the force of the falls,
I wistfully walk through a meadow of memories.
Images of moments filled with passion -- then quiet.
Peacefulness in the midst of such fervor
Is a reminder of a stronger and softer love.

Sue Bruemmer

FABLE

Once upon a day in spring, a disgruntled dog decided to leave his home in Peoria in search of happiness. After packing some granola, fig newtons, peanut butter (crunchy) sandwiches and Gatorade into a backpack and fastening a sleeping bag onto it, he began his journey.

The dog walked across state after state in his quest, but somehow happiness always eluded him. Whenever he asked about happiness, he was told that happiness had either just left or possibility might arrive at some time in the future. He grew very discouraged.

Despite the many disappointments, the dog kept on seeking his ubiquitous goal. He visited big cities. He prowled small towns. He scaled mountains. He ranged through valleys. He sought happiness everywhere, but it was futile. Happiness was not to be found.

After 5 months of wandering, the dog arrived in Boise, Idaho. He was ambling dispiritedly down a street when he accidentally bumped into a rather noxious goat. The dog, already irritated, bit the goat on a foreleg; whereupon, the goat promptly butted the dog in the left haunch.

"Ouch!" yiped the dog. "Why are you butting me?"

"Because you bit me," replied the goat.

"I bit you because you got in my way. I'm looking for something I can't find."

"What are you looking for?" asked the goat.

"Happiness," said the dog.

"And didn't it make you happy to bite me?" asked the goat.

"Indeed it did," answered the dog.

"Well, then, I'm happy I butted you," said the goat.

So, the dog and goat stayed in Boise happily biting and butting one another.

MORAL: Happiness is sometimes found in strange ways and strange places.

Bert Howard

THOUGHTS ON WRITING

Print captures the fragility of feelings and visions. Writing keeps mortality at bay.

Mary Anne Simpson

Writing is ten percent art and ninety percent craft. The art is the fun part--the kaleidoscopic flashing of images and tensions. The craft is the awful part--the sweeping and shaping--turning experience into symbol.

Writing is lonely--isolating yourself to tell about what you could be living, creating and controlling mini-worlds.

"They" say writers need approval--the constant gearing towards huge, glaring audiences, dissolving frowns with clear scenes and real characters.

Writing is good when black words on a page become much more.

Jan Seaburg

Through writing we intensify our sensory perceptions, extend our powers of observation, clarify our feelings and ideas, and thus, communicate not only with others but also with ourselves.

Marilyn Miller

THE WRITING CONSULTANT - FRIEND OR FOE?

Rita Prime

Dear Diary,

Little did I know when I signed up for this Institute that fame, fortune, and/or failure might be my fate. Naïvely happy, I strolled into the Holiday Inn that Monday morning and sponged up all the precious gems radiating from Hans Guth, exuberant in my desire to "go out and do likewise." I knew that I would bring back to my district all the expertise I was about to 'inhale' from my well-versed colleagues.

Then the bubble burst, leaving me with stark reality. Me? A writing consultant? Where to begin? What to cover? How to impress? Before long, though, I was enjoying my misery, for voices seemed to softly echo my doubts. Gradually, the voices became louder and stronger. "Just what am I supposed to do if my district asks me to do this or that?" "What do we do about handling hostile teachers who want none of our stuff?" Question: Will we be friend, or will we be foe?

After a bit of thinking about these questions, I concluded that "it takes two to tango," and suddenly the whole idea of being a consultant became less threatening. The question that logically followed was, "What may consultants expect of teachers, and what may teachers expect of consultants?"

To begin with, in order for consultants to be effective and helpful, it is necessary for teachers to <u>want</u> their help. Assuming teachers do want this help, then they must examine their philosophy of teaching writing and of the writing process. Admittedly, some teachers hate to teach writing; they should never attempt it. Others, on the other hand, would like to do a good job of teaching writing but feel inadequate in one or several areas. These are the teachers for whom consulting services will be valuable.

Since relationships involve interaction between two parties, what may be the expectations of both parties? First, and perhaps most important, consultants must be made aware of the needs of the teachers with whom they will be working. Then they must attempt to meet these needs by being adequately prepared to present information - ideas, goals, strategies, research findings, resources, etc. - that will make the job of teaching writing a joy rather than a burden. Time should be planned for a question/answer session in order to clarify any misunderstandings, and a date should be set for a follow-up inservice.

Teachers, too, have a responsibility, the first one being that they must recognize the fact that consultants are people who help teachers of writing, not people who make teachers of writing. Teachers, therefore, must be willing to make a personal commitment of both self and time. How? For those who feel less competent than they desire, the universities offer courses on the teaching of writing, as either regular or extension courses. Professional organizations, such as NCTE, CATE, and CRA provide a wealth of knowledge through their journal publications and conferences. Publishers are available at these conferences to explain, display, and many times, give away their excellent materials for all grade levels.

Not only must teachers make a personal commitment of self, but they must also make a commitment of time. For although consultants may provide excellent lesson plans, gimmicks, starters, etc., teachers must recognize that these are aids that will hopefully generate an effort to adapt these materials for individual teachers and for specific purposes, inasmuch as everything will not be valuable to every teacher.

Thank you, dear diary, for letting me bounce these thoughts off on you. I sincerely hope that we who may become consultants will be looked upon as friend - not foe.

There's No Deceit In The Cauliflower

or

Inanities, Asides, Infidelities
And Other Memorial Awards

by

The South Bay Area Writers Project
as shared with and collected
by Greg Martin, Produced and
Directed by Iris Tiedt, and
read, of course, as a contract
between writer and audience.

(with integrity)
Are you comfortable with ...
What's the focus ...
I'd like to, but ...
I'm flexible ...
Let's come together now ...
Are you really committed to the subject ...

(with sincerity)
I can identify with that ...
I hear where you're coming from, but ...
A position paper is important ...
Is anyone willing to share ...
... are threatened by ...
... take responsibility for ...

(with humor)
Let's not waste two days writing ...
You can use this or not, I don't care ...
Sometimes we have to get out our frustrations ...
Nobody's got the corner on _____ ...
Well, how does the group feel ...
I do a neat unit like that in my class, too ...

(with concern)
I hear you saying that _____ ...
I took the liberty of ...
Oh, there's another thing I thought the group would like to talk about or consider ...
But ... the process is the process ...
Would anyone like to share ...
We can talk about it later ...

(with cheese sauce)

There's a need to get in touch with
Sharing and taking responsibility,
Identifying with ... Coming together on:
But an aerial view of the gathering
Doing injury to our self-esteem,
We're not committed ... we're uncomfortable.

-really neat-
-I agree-
-how nice, yes?-
Well, how does the rest of the group feel?

ORAL OR WRITTEN COMMENTS A TEACHER MAY MAKE TO STUDENTS REGARDING THEIR WRITING

What do you like best about what you wrote?
Do you like what you wrote?
What would you do differently with your writing?
What effect do you wish to achieve?
Did you feel you had to do it?
What did you learn from writing this?
Tell me about your title.
I like this.
I'd like to keep this.
What do you find easiest to write about?
Thanks for sharing this with me.
I think you may be having a bad day.
May I share this with the class?
What was your point?
I cannot tell what you have in mind.
What are you asking the reader to accept?
Fine description here.
Use more detail.
Be specific.
Did you know anyone like this character?
Read it outloud to yourself.
Do people really talk like this?
Read this to me.
What might he have said?
Good place for dialogue or a quote.
Show me. Don't tell me.
Nice choice of quote.
Don't be afraid to sound like yourself.
What "voice" are you using?
Sentence might be better some place else
Do you feel you support your topic sentence?
Is this the most logical arrangement of details?
You've already said that.
This made me feel (happy, sad, etc). How did it make you feel?
What an exciting image!
I've had this experience myself.
I learned something.
Thank you for letting me see your feelings.
Have you ever lived in a place like this?
Why did you choose this topic?
What problem did you have in writing this?
Why is writing difficult for you?
Why is writing easy for you?
Please come and read this to me.
Such a good word.

Powerful writing.
Good stuff.
I enjoyed reading this.
Four word sentences give paper a lumpy style. Combine sentences.
Why?
Develop further.
Refreshing
No transition
You've already said this.
Sounds like you had fun!
Share this with some friends.
Have your parents read this?
What alternatives did you have in choosing this form?
Would you like to write a poem about this experience?
Does this interest you?
This idea deserves to be developed.
Say this without so many "ands".
You sound (happy, angry, etc.).
You're a great writer!
Fun!
This sounds familiar.
Your paper is a joy to read.
Do indent.
This would be fun to act out.
Conclusion gives a nice sense of closure.
Needs closure.
Please make a copy for me.
What happened to . . .?
I appreciate your sensitivity to this.
Your humor is refreshing.
Insightful.
Receptive
You could expand this into a story.
Try writing this in another form.
I don't think this word means what you think it means.
I owe you a hug!
Could you illustrate this?
If you were making this into a movie, who would play the roles?
Shows improvement
If you need someone to talk to about this, I'll be available after class.
Did this really happen?
Sure had me fooled! (new twist to story)
Is this all one sentence?
What demands do you make on your reader?
Where are you asking your reader to go?
What are you asking your reader to believe or accept?
What "filling in" of spaces or details are you expecting?

RESOURCES ON TEACHING WRITING

The following books are recommended to teachers who are interested in locating more information about teaching students to write. (E,elementary;S, secondary; C, college)

Selected Books

Adoff,Arnold, ed. I Am the Darker Brother, Macmillan. A collection of modern poems; a good way into Black poetry. (E-S)

Alexander, Arthur. The Magic of Words .Prentice-Hall, 1967.

Berenstain, Stan and Jan. Bears in the Night A good book for story theater. (E)

Cahn, William and Rhoda Cahn. The Story of Writing. Harvey House, Inc, 1963. (E)

Carlson,Ruth Kearney. Sparkling Words. NCTE 225 creative writing ideas . (E-S)

Christensen, Francis, Notes Toward A New Rhetoric.Harper 1967. Explains sentence and paragraph structure in terms of generative rhetoric. Presents an approach to writing instructiom which many teachers use as a basis for sentence combining and paragraph organization. (S-C)

Coger,Leslie, and Melvin R. White. Readers Theatre Handbook, A Dramatic Approach to Literature. Scott-Foresman,1967. (E-S)

Dodd,Anne Wescott, Write Now. Learning Trends,Globe Book Co. A fairly elementary discussion of short story.poetry, journals;one act play which could be adapted K - 12.

Dunning,Stephen,ed. Mad,Sad, and Glad. Scholastic Press. A collection of poems from Scholastic Creative Writing Awards. (E-S)

_____ .Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle. An anthology of poetry for young people. (E-S)

Everrts, Eldonna A.,ed. Explorations in Children's Writing. National Council of Teachers of English,1970.

Papers growing out of 1968 Institute on Elementary English at Dallas,Texas including a Potpourri on writing by James Britton and Eldonna Everrts. (E-S)

Frostic, Gwen. A Place on Earth, Presscraft.
Hand set print on lovely paper. Block prints delicately illustrate the poems. (E-S)

_____. These Things Are Ours. Presscraft.

Gallo, Joseph D., and Henry W. Rink. Shaping College Writing. Harcourt Brace. 1968.
Excellent for advanced exercises in topic sentence writing. Chapters on Unity and Coherence. Many good exercises. Chaps.1-3 especially helpful.

Goldberg, Enid. How to Run a School Newspaper.
Step-by-step instruction on organization of school papers. Masthead, layout, ads, newswriting, etc. (S)

Heide, Florence, Sound of Sunshine, Sound of Rain.
Parents' Magazine Press
A picture book about a blind child's perceptions. Lots of sensory detail. Could be used on any grade level.

Helfman, Elizabeth. Signs and Symbols Around the World.
Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., 1974. (E)

Henderson, Harold G. An Introduction to Haiku.
Doubleday, 1958.
Highly recommended. Interesting historical background. James Moffett uses this to teach sensory writing. (E-S)

Hautzig, Esther. In School: Learning in Four Languages.
Macmillan, 1969.

Hofsinde, Robert. Indian Picture Writing. Wm. Morrow Co. 1959.
An interesting book for anyone interested in signs and symbols. (E-S)

Joslin, Sesyle. What [illegible] Do, Dear? Scott Books, 1959.
A witty picture book for primary school children. An easy model to follow for high school students writing picture books for children. (E-S)

Katz, Marjorie P. Fingerprint Owls and Other Fantasies.
M. Evans and Co. J.B. Lippincott.
Fun! Buy this and four stamp pads for any group. This is a picture book of all the possible designs that can be made with fingerprints and a little doodling. A good exercise to loosen up the class, to stimulate writing stories, to show kids how to illustrate their writing. Artistic success for all!

Koch, Kenneth. Wishes, Lies, and Dreams. Random House, 1970.
The first 56 pages of the book contain practical ideas on teaching children to write poetry. The remainder of the book includes examples of his students' poetry. A useful reference book. (E)

_____ Rose, Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?
Teaching appreciation of fine classical poetry through writing . Very imaginative assignments designed for sixth graders can be adapted for junior high and high school students. (E-S)

Leavitt, Hart, and David Stone. Stop, Look, and Write.
Bantam Books, 1964.
This book contains photogrpahs and lessons to improve students' ability to observe what is there as well as what is not there and to effectively communicate his observation. Contains some good writing exercises.
(E-S)

_____ The Writer's Eye, Bantam Books.

_____ Pictures for Writing. Bantam Books.
This books is designed for grades 7-9.

Lee, Charlotte I. Oral Interpretation. Houghton Mifflin.
(S)

Lewis, Richard. ed. Miracles. Children's poems from the English-speaking world. Very vivid imagery. Good for any age level.

Lopate, Philip. Being With Children . Bantam Book, 1975.
Lopate is a poet. This book is a true account of Lopate's interest in teaching children how to communicate their feelings and experiences. The book is a joyous experience combining humorous and tender personal experiences with practical ideas to use in class.
(E-S)

Martin, Nancy, and Pat D'Arcy. Writing and Learning Across the Curriculum. Wardlock ed.
This English publication must be ordered from Britain as it is not yet available in the U.S.
An excellent discussion of research carried out in schools where all teachers-science to wood shop-concerned themselves with students' writing.
(E-C)

Mendoza, George. I Must Hurry for the Sea Is Coming In.
Prentice-Hall
A lovely poem, picture book to use for creative writing assignments. (E)

Merriam, Evelyn. The Inner City Mother Goose. Simon and Schuster.
For upper level elementary school; poems based on Mother Goose rhymes. (E-S)

O'Neill,Mary. Words, Words, Words. Doubleday,1966.
Poems about the English language. (E)

_____. Hailstones and Halibut Bones. Doubleday,1961.
Poems-including some good poems on colors.
The county office has a film based on this book. (E)

Povermire,E.Kingsley. Choral Speaking and the Verse Choir.
A.S.Barnes,1973.
This is the book to help you organize choral speaking in the classroom. (E-S)

Simon,Sidney B.,Robert C. Hawley, and David D. Britton.
Composition for Personal Growth: Values Clarification Through Writing. Hart Publishing Co. 1973.
A good source of topics for journals and specific values clarification writing assignments. (S)

Sendak,Maurice. Where the Wild Things Are.
A good book for Story Theater (E)
Useful for stimulating creative writing

Smith, James A. Creative Teaching of the Language Arts in the Elementary School. Allyn &Bacon,1967.

A general over-all view with many suggestions on how and what to do. (E)

Stanford, Gene. A Guidebook for Teaching Composition.
Allyn&Bacon.

Taylor,Margaret. Wht's Yr Nme?. Harcourt Brace, Inc. 1970.
(E)

Viorst,Judith. Alexander and the Terrible,Horrible, No Good Very Bad Day. Atheneum Press.
A humorous children's picture book. A good model for a creative writing assignment. (E)

Wermuth,Linda. Imagination and Language, Prentice Hall,1976.
Detailed lesson plans for creative writing assignments.
(E-S)

Yolen,Jane. Grayling, World Publishing Co.
A beautiful picture story from the Shetland Islands. For elementary students or for secondary students in a mythology class studying the transformation of animals into humans, humans into animals. (E)

Xerox, Now Poetry, Try A Haiku, Educational Publications.
This 55¢ pamphlet is very useful for teaching haiku.
(E-S)

Zolotow,Charlotte. Someday. Harper. 1965.
A delightful picture book. A good stimulus for writing for any age level. (E-S)

San Jose Mercury Thursday, July 28, 1977

Teachers doing rewrite job on their composition skills

Sixteen Santa Clara Valley elementary and high school instructors who teach writing have gone back to school to bone up on composition skills in an intensive, five-week course at San Jose State University.

The teachers, representing nine school districts, are refining their skills in narrative and expository writing, poetry, journalism, correspondence and grammar.

When they return to the classroom in the fall they will act as "consultants" to their colleagues.

"The teacher is the key to what happens in the classroom, good or bad," according to Dr. Iris Tiedt, a consultant leading the South Bay Writing Project, part of a statewide effort to improve writing abilities.

"Through writing practices at the institute," she said, "they are experiencing the kinds of assignments they give their students."

She said the teachers are learning they can write better and, therefore, gain more confidence about involving young people in writing.

Participants have reached some conclusions, Dr. Tiedt said. Among them, she added, are:

- No one can teach another person to write. Each person must personally engage in the process.

- A teacher can provide only an accepting climate, stimulus, information and personal encouragement.

- Research supports the importance of oral language development, positive reinforcement and prewriting warm-up. She said a prewriting warm-up may consist of showing a film, reading stories or holding an oral discussion before beginning to write.

- Students must see themselves as writers and should realize that part of the writing process is rereading and rewriting. The teacher is not a copy editor.

The nine valley school districts participating in the project are Berryessa, Cupertino and Union elementary districts, Mountain View-Los Altos high school district, and Gilroy, Milpitas, Morgan Hill, San Jose and Santa Clara unified districts.

Other Santa Clara County groups as well as San Jose State are involved in the endeavor.

Project participants (from left) William Rice, Bert Howard, Shirley Newsom and Dr. Iris Tiedt